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INFO RHEFDIA/DIA WASHINGTON DC
RHMFISS/HQ USSOUTHCOM MIAMI FL
RUCPDO/DEPT OF COMMERCE WASHINGTON DC
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHINGTON DC
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RUEHSG/AMEMBASSY SANTIAGO

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STATE FOR R/MR, I/PP, WHA/BSC, WHA/PDA, INR/IAA

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TAGS: [ECON](#) [KMDR](#) [KPAO](#) [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [SNAR](#) [EFIN](#) [CI](#)
SUBJECT: Santiago Dec. 11 Media Report

Lead Story

[1](#)1. All presidential campaigns concluded last night with rallies in different parts of the city (All dailies, 12/11).

U.S. and Latin America

[1](#)2. The United States is fully aware of the "distancing" from Venezuela, but wants to establish a "positive" and "constructive" dialogue with that country so that both can discuss mutual concerns "candidly," said Assistant Secretary of State for Western Hemisphere Affairs Arturo Valenzuela. The assistant secretary also admitted that tension between the two countries was heightened due to the U.S.-Colombia agreement for the use of military bases. With regard to Cuba, Valenzuela said the United States wants to see an improved performance on the part of Cuba, but is not looking for a "sudden change" in relations with the island. He highlighted the measures that the White House has begun applying, revoking Bush administration decisions, such as liberalizing trips and remittances for Cuban-Americans and setting up a "direct" dialogue on issues such as immigration and the eventual reestablishment of direct mail between the two countries (Conservative, influential El Mercurio, 12/11).

President Obama and Nobel Peace Prize

[1](#)3. Headline: "Obama upon receiving the Nobel Peace Prize: "My Merits are Few.'"

Subheadlines: Obama admitted that his achievements are few and cannot be compared to what others who have received the award have done. He responded to the controversy over his decision to send troops to Afghanistan by stating that "war is sometimes necessary." He also said the United States is committed with global security (El Mercurio, 12/11).

[1](#)4. Headline: "Barack Obama justifies War in Afghanistan as he receives the Nobel Peace Prize."

Subheadline: The U.S. president was issued the award just ten days

after announcing he would send 30,000 soldiers in to Afghanistan to toughen the war on the Taliban (Conservative, influential La Tercera, 12/11).

¶5. For the Nobel Peace Prize "war is sometimes necessary" (Government-owned La Nacion, 12/11).

¶6. "Real Cute: Obama defends war as he receives the Nobel Peace Prize" (Popular high- circulation Las Ultimas Noticias, 12/11).

U.S.-Colombia

¶7. The bombing of a Colombian FARC guerrilla base in Ecuador in March 2008, which resulted in the death of guerrilla Chief Raul Reyes, was supported by the Manta base which was then U.S. operated, says the final report drafted by Ecuador's Truth and Transparency Commission. The information has brought new tension to the Ecuador-Colombia relations and between the United States and the region. The report says that the intelligence provided by the base in question was "fundamental for the location and surveillance of Colombia's priority target," adding that this "exceeded" the objective of the agreement regarding the base, which was to counter narcotics trafficking (La Nacion, 12/11).
SIMONS